

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-15 IO-14 /084 W
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FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1038
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL TORONTO

UNCLAS QUEBEC 0317

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT PGOV CA
SUBJ: PRELIMINARY REACTIONS TO PREMIERS CONFERENCE

REF: OTTAWA 07511 (NOTAL)

1. DESPITE REJECTION OF PM LEVESQUE'S RECIPROCITY PROPOSAL
AT ST ANDREWS, OUR SOURCES HERE UNANIMOUSLY CONSIDER QUEBEC'S
RECIPROCITY PLOY A SUCCESS. THOUGH SOME WHO WOULD SEE LAN-
GUAGE LAW MODIFIED ARE CHAGRINED THAT NO AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED,
LANGUAGE HARDLINERS SMUGLY POINT TO ANGLOPHONE "HYPOCRISY" AS
"PROOF" THAT CONFEDERATION HAS LITTLE TO OFFER THE QUEBECOIS.
2. MOST TANGIBLE IMMEDIATE REACTION TO FAILURE OF LEVESQUE'S
PROPOSAL WAS THAT, AS WE PREDICTED SOME WEEKS AGO (QUEBEC 290
AND 306) LEVESQUE HAD NO SOONER RETURNED FROM ST ANDREWS THAN
GUILLOTINE FELL ON BILL 101 DEBATE. PQ PARLIAMENTARY LEADER BURNS
INTRODUCED CLOSURE MOTION YESTERDAY (AUGUST 22) WHICH WILL END COMMIT
TEE
DELIBERATION OF THE BILL TODAY AND, IN EFFECT, GUARANTEE
THAT THE BILL WILL BECOME LAW BY THE END OF THE WEEK.
ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT SCENARIO, ENACTMENT OF BILL 101 IN
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TIME FOR THE UPCOMING SCHOOL OPENINGS WILL BRING AN END TO THE
CURRENT MARATHON NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSION, AND DEPUTIES WILL BREAK
FOR ABOUT A MONTH VACATION.

3. THE FAILURE OF THE LEVESQUE INITIATIVE AT ST
ANDREWS HAS MET WITH A GALLIC SHRUG OF THE SHOULDERS IN GOVERN-
MENT CIRCLES. GENERAL ATTITUDE IS THAT ANGLOPHONE PREMIERS

HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE SINCERE WILLINGNESS TO GO THE EXTRA MILE FOR THEIR FRANCOPHONE MINORITIES, BUT THAT THEY BUCKLED UNDER PRESSURE FROM OTTAWA. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS MINISTER CLAUDE MORIN SAID FLATLY THAT THE PREMIERS' REFUSAL WAS PROOF THAT THEY WERE NOT READY TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO MINORITY LANGUAGE RIGHTS. THE PROVINCIAL PREMIERS WERE ALWAYS READY TO MAKE DECLARATIONS OF GOOD INTENTIONS VIS-A-VIS THEIR FRANCO-PHONES, MORIN SAID, BUT UNWILLING TO ENTER INTO CONCRETE AGREEMENTS. LEVESQUE HIMSELF REACTED MORE MILDLY AFTER HIS INITIAL OUTBURST AT THE CONFERENCE ("THEY WILL HAVE BROUGHT IT UPON THEMSELVES") STRESSING THAT HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE ATTITUDES OF "CERTAIN" PREMIERS, AND LEAVING THE DOOR OPEN TO THE POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATING RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS AT "SOME OTHER FORUM", CONCEIVABLY THIS FALL'S EDUCATION MINISTERX CONFERENCE OR ANOTHER PREMIERS CONFERENCE.

4. COMMENT: THE REJECTION OF THE RECIPROCITY PROPOSAL HAS DOMINATED LOCAL DISCUSSION OF THE ST ANDREWS CONFERENCE TO THE EXCLUSION OF ANY OTHER ISSUES THAT WERE ON THE AGENDA, INCLUDING ECONOMIC ISSUES. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER AS QUEBECOIS COME TO REALIZE THE FULL IMPLICATIONS OF THE REJECTION OF QUEBEC'S RECIPROCITY OFFER. AT THE MOMENT, MOST PEOPLE, INCLUDING SENIOR OFFICIALS, ARE FOCUSING ON "PERFIDIOUS" ANGLOPHONE REACTION TO WHAT THEY GENERALLY CONSIDER A REASONABLE OFFER. MCNAMARA

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Event:
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